

SPEECH

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

CAN I FIRST SAY HOW HUMBLE I AM TODAY WHEN SO MANY OF YOU HAVE JOINED MYSELF, MY PARTNERS AND MY FAMILY ON THIS OCCASION SO THAT I CAN SAY THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT, YOUR KINDNESS AND YOUR GENEROSITY OVER THE LAST SIX OR SEVEN YEARS, SO THAT I AND MY PARTNERS CAN SHOW YOU THE LAUNCH OF OUR NEW FIRM BRAND AND SO THAT I CAN INTRODUCE YOU TO EACH OF OUR FOUR NEW PARTNERS.

I AM SURE THAT THERE IS A FEAR AMONGST YOU THAT I AM GOING TO TALK FOREVER AND WHILST WHAT I HAVE TO SAY COULD LAST FOR HOURS, I KNOW YOU ARE ALL STANDING AND I WILL MAKE IT AS BRIEF AS POSSIBLE.

IT HAS BEEN A DIFFICULT SEVEN YEARS. I HAVE REACHED THE EDGE AND I HAVE NEARLY JUMPED OFF. I HAVE BEEN HUMBLLED IN THE EYES OF THE WORLD WITH FALSE, OUTRAGEOUS AND HORRENDOUS ALLEGATIONS --- I HAVE SUFFERED PUBLIC EXPOSURE THAT OUGHT NEVER HAVE BEEN ALLOWED IN A FAIR SOCIETY.

I HAVE HAD TO FIGHT THE EXCESSES OF THE UNLIMITED MONEY OF A NATIONAL TV STATION, WHO WERE ABLE TO CLAIM THEIR FEES AS A TAX DEDUCTION AND I WAS NOT, AND I HAVE BEEN SUBJECT TO THE PRECARIOUS AND INHOSPITABLE ENVIRONMENT OF A FAILING FRAGILE LEGAL SYSTEM.

IF ANYTHING, I HAVE LEARNT THE HORRORS OF A LEGAL SYSTEM. IT IS NOT COMFORTABLE - IT IS INHOSPITABLE - IT IS UNEQUAL, IT FAVOURS THE RICH AND POWERFUL.

HOWEVER, AT THE END OF THE DAY, YOU WILL APPRECIATE THAT THAT PROBABLY IS AN ADVANTAGE BECAUSE I THINK IT WILL MAKE ME A BETTER LAWYER AND IF NOTHING ELSE IS ACHIEVED, THAT IS GOOD FOR THOSE WHO ARE MY CLIENTS. I HAVE ACHIEVED AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE LAW THAT I DIDN'T HAVE. I HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE INHOSPITABLE NATURE OF THE LEGAL PRACTICE. I HAVE A GREATER UNDERSTANDING AND CAN EMPATHISE MORE WITH PEOPLE IN RELATION TO THEIR LEGAL PROBLEMS, AND I AM CONTINUALLY AWARE OF THE EXCESSES OF LEGAL COSTING AND THE IMPRACTICAL AND UNWORLDLY ATTITUDE OF SOME ON THE NEW SOUTH WALES BAR.

A FAMOUS AMERICAN LAWYER ONCE SAID "THAT OUR PROFESSION IN ITS HIGHEST WALKS HAVE AFFORDED THE BEST EMPLOYMENT IN WHICH ANY PERSON COULD ENGAGE IN. AFTER MY EXPERIENCE, I HAVE GRAVE DOUBTS ABOUT THAT OPINION, LAWYERS TODAY SEEM TO PURSUE MONEY RATHER THAN JUSTICE.

IT HAS, INDEED, BEEN A DIFFICULT TIME FOR MYSELF, MY FAMILY, MY BUSINESS PARTNERS, MY EMPLOYEES AND MY FRIENDS.

MY DEPRESSION HAS BEEN REAL AND AS I SAID ABOVE, THERE ARE ALWAYS, IN THESE THINGS, SOME PLUSES. ONE OF THOSE PLUSES IS THAT I, AT LEAST, HAVE COME TO UNDERSTAND DEPRESSION, A REAL ILLNESS, AN ILLNESS THAT TAKES SO MANY OF OUR BROTHERS AND

SISTERS COMMIT SUICIDE, OLD PEOPLE, LONELY PEOPLE AND ALL TYPES IN OUR SOCIETY. UNTIL YOU HAVE SUFFERED THE ENORMITY OF THE PAIN OF A DEPRESSIVE ILLNESS YOU WILL NEVER REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT IT IS ALL ABOUT.

I HAVE NOW DONE THAT AND I HOPE THAT THAT MAKES ME A BETTER PERSON AND MORE UNDERSTANDING OF THOSE WHO SUFFER THIS DEBILITATING ILLNESS.

I HAVE ALSO SEEN THE OUTRAGEOUS ENORMITY OF THE IMPACT OF BLOODY MINDED PEOPLE WHO ARE ENCOURAGED THROUGH THE RUTHLESS RAPACITY OF AN UNBRIDLED MAJORITY AND THE GREAT EXCESSES AND RELENTLESS POWER OF THE MEDIA OR FOURTH ESTATE.

I HAVE SEEN THE EXCESSES OF THE POLICE WHO LOSE REALITY AND BECOME DETERMINED TO RUIN SOMEONE FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS, WHATEVER THEY BE, BUT OBJECTIVITY, HONESTY AND INTEGRITY NO LONGER EXIST IN THEIR EYES. THE THREE LEADERS OF THE NEW SOUTH WALES POLICE FORCE, AND I AM TALKING ABOUT THE VERY TOP, ARE A RUDDERLESS GROUP OF INCOMPETENT FOOLS AND THE CONTRACT ENTERED INTO FOR THE PEOPLE OF NEW SOUTH WALES WITH THE LEADER WHICH REQUIRES A REDUCTION IN CRIME, OPEN AND ACCOUNTABLE POLICING, SUCCESS IN A CHANGED POLICE CULTURE HAVE FAILED TO BE HONOURED ON HIS PART, BUT WE, THE TAXPAYER, HAVE HONOURED THE OTHER PART OF THE CONTRACT BY PAYING A CONTRACT PRICE OF \$425,000.00 TO THE HIGHEST PAID PUBLIC SERVANT IN AUSTRALIA.

IDEALISM WHICH I ONCE FELT, AND WHICH I ONCE TRIED TO EXPRESS THROUGH MY INVOLVEMENT WITH THE COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES AND OTHER ORGANISATIONS, SEEMS NOW TO ME TO HAVE MET THE SAME INDIFFERENCES AS ARE WIDELY EVIDENT THROUGH THIS AUSTRALIAN COMMUNITY AT LARGE, A COMMUNITY WHO HAS LET OUR GOVERNMENTS TAKE US BACKWARDS OVER THE PAST TEN (10) YEARS IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND CIVIL LIBERTIES. THERE IS NO COMMITMENT OR BELIEF ANYMORE, NO LIGHT ON THE HILL, EVERYTHING IS NOW MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES.

THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT THE PRESENT STATE GOVERNMENT ON THIS ISSUE IS A DISGRACE AND THE OPPOSITION, EVEN WORSE.

AS FAR AS CIVIL LIBERTIES ARE CONCERNED THE PREMIER AND LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF THEM, NOR CAN THEY EVEN SPELL THE WORDS "CIVIL LIBERTY".

GOVERNMENT ARROGANCE AND OPPOSITION INDIFFERENCE MAKE FOR BAD GOVERNMENT AND SHOWS AN INABILITY OF GOVERNMENT TO ACT COMPASSIONATELY, CARINGLY, AN INABILITY TO FORGIVE, TO HELP TO REHABILITATE, AN INABILITY TO PARDON OR TO VISIT THE SICK, OR TO HELP THOSE IN PRISON, OR SHOW ANY TYPE OF COMPASSION TO THOSE WHO ARE IN NEED OF COMPASSION.

I ONCE THOUGHT AS A LAWYER THAT IT WAS NECESSARY TO BE PASSIONATE IN THE PURSUIT OF EGALITARIANISM --- WHILE COMMUNISM WENT DISASTROUSLY WRONG --- THE CENTRAL IDEA IN ITS CONCEPT OF ALL MEN AND WOMEN BEING BORN EQUAL --- HAD SOMETHING GOING FOR IT.

I BELIEVE IT IS RIGHT INDEED THAT WE SHOULD TODAY, AS AUSTRALIANS, BE UNITED IN AN ENDEAVOUR TO TEAR DOWN ALL THE CITADELS OF ESTABLISHED PRIVILEGE. THEIR AIM MUST BE TO MAKE EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY MORE THAN A CATCH-CRY, BUT A REALITY INSTEAD.

JUSTICE AT LEAST PREVAILED AFTER A LONG BATTLE OF LITIGATION.

MAYBE AT THE END OF THE DAY I HAVE LOST FINANCIALLY THE LEGAL SYSTEM HAS WON AND I HAVE WON A LONG BATTLE OF LITIGATION. I WILL NEVER BE THE SAME, PERSONALLY BUT THAT, THAT DOES NOT KILL CAN ONLY MAKE ME STRONGER.

IT ALSO HAS MADE ME MORE TOLERANT, MORE CARING AND MORE UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROBLEMS OF HUMAN NATURE, OF PEOPLE, HOW THEY SUFFER IN THEIR LIFE DUE TO NO FAULT OF THEIR OWN AND HOW OUR LEGAL SYSTEM FAILS TO ANSWER THEIR CRY FOR HELP.

THERE OUGHT TO BE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF OUR CHRISTIAN OR MORAL VALUES, AND WHAT IS NEEDED IS A UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY THAT IS ABLE TO CONSOLE RATHER THAN BE CONSOLED, TO UNDERSTAND RATHER THAN BE UNDERSTOOD --- OR AS SAINT FRANCIS SAID, WHERE THERE IS HATRED, THERE SHOULD BE LOVE; WHERE THERE IS INJURY, LET THERE BE NO PAIN; WHERE THERE IS DESPAIR, THERE SHOULD BE HOPE; WHERE THERE IS SADNESS, WE GIVE JOY AND DARKNESS, LET US LIGHT UP, AND NO-ONE CAN SAY

THAT THESE WONDERFUL THINGS SHOULD NOT BE PART OF OUR SOCIETY TODAY.

IT HAS CERTAINLY KNOCKED OFF SOME OF MY EXCESS EGO AND I HAD PLENTY OF THAT, AND WHEN ONE GETS PUMMELED TO THE GROUND, WHEN ONE FACES DEATH IN THE FORM OF SUICIDE, AND WHEN ONE REALISES THAT THE ONLY PERSON THAT ONE CAN THINK ABOUT IS THE ALMIGHTY, AND PRAY TO THE ALMIGHTY, ONE GETS PRETTY LOW, AND I WORRY BECAUSE THERE, BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD GO EACH AND EVERY ONE OF US, AND MY LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF PEOPLE AND THEIR HORRENDOUS PROBLEMS HAS NOT HAD UNTIL NOW HAD ENOUGH AFFECT ON ME. THIS EXPERIENCE HAS GIVEN ME THAT WONDERFUL INSIGHT TO UNDERSTAND EVEN MORE THE HURT AND PAIN IN OUR SOCIETY.

SADLY, WITHIN THIS BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY, XENOPHOBIA AND HOMOPHOBIA IS NOT DEAD. IT IS DIRECTED ESPECIALLY AMONGST THOSE OF US WHO ARE WEAKER, AND OF COURSE, THOSE OF US WHO ARE DIFFERENT. TODAY, AS MUCH AS EVER, IT MUST BE FOUGHT WHEREVER IT IS FOUND. THERE IS TODAY NO MORE DESPERATE NEED IN THE COMMUNITY THAN FOR A CLASS OF COURAGEOUS EDUCATED AND IDEALISTIC PEOPLE WHO SHOULD BE OUT THERE WILLING TO HOLD UP THE LAW AS A SHIELD IN DEFENCE OF THE WEAK, AGAINST THE EXCESSES OF THE STRONG.

I WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT THE LAW WAS SOMETHING LIKE WHAT WAS SAID IN THE OLD TESTAMENT - WHEN WORDS WERE USED "LET JUSTICE ROLL DOWN LIKE WATER AND RIGHTEOUSNESS LIKE AN EVER FLOWING STREAM". IT IS NOT.

IT HAS UNFORTUNATELY BECOME TOO CONTROLLED BY THE EXCESSES AND JEALOUSIES OF INDIVIDUALS AND OF POWER BROKERS, AND UNFORTUNATELY, THE ECONOMIC RATIONALISM POLICIES OF AN UNCARING GOVERNMENT. WHEN YOU APPLY ECONOMIC RATIONALE PRINCIPLES TO THE LEGAL SYSTEM IT ONLY ASSISTS THE RICH TO STAND OVER ALL OTHERS. THE LEGAL SYSTEM IS OWNED BY THE PUBLIC, IT IS NOT PART OF SOME ECONOMIC RATIONALIST'S POLICY OF GOVERNMENT.

ALL MY FAITH IN LAW AND LAWYERS HAS BEEN SEVERELY DAMAGED. STILL, WE SHOULD APPRECIATE THAT LAWYERS HAVE A PROBLEM BECAUSE AS A LAWYER, I BUILD NO BRIDGES. I CONSTRUCT NO TOWERS. I CONSTRUCT NO ENGINE. I PAINT NO PICTURE. IN FACT, THERE IS LITTLE AT ALL THAT WE CAN DO AS LAWYERS THAT THE EYE OF MAN COULD SEE. HOWEVER, MY LAWYERS DID GIVE ME THEIR TIME, THEIR KINDNESS AND UNDERSTANDING, PUT UP WITH A MAD, ERRATIC AND DIFFICULT CLIENT AND LIKE ALL LAWYERS, THEY, TOGETHER WITH ME, I HOPE, CAN TO SOME EXTENT MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR A MORE PEACEFUL LIFE IN A PEACEFUL STATE. MY LAWYERS DID THAT.

IT IS MY VIEW THAT THE LAW SHOULD ONLY BE ABOUT JUSTICE, NOT ABOUT MONEY, NOT ABOUT ECONOMIC RATIONALISM, BUT ABOUT THE PURSUIT OF JUSTICE.

I AM A CHRISTIAN, BUT SOMETIMES IT IS WORTHWHILE LOOKING AT WHAT PEOPLE LIKE THE BUDDHA SAID, AND THE BUDDHIST VIEWS,

THE BUDDHA SAID, "ENDURANCE IS ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT DISCIPLINES; BUT IT IS TO HIM WHO ENDURES THAT, THAT THE FINAL VICTORY COMES." WELL THIS HAS CERTAINLY BEEN A LONG ENDURING PROCESS.

I NOW WANT TO TRY AND CHANGE MY LIFE, I WANT TO LAUGH OFTEN AND MUCH. I WANT TO WIN THE RESPECT OF OUR COMMUNITY. I WANT TO EARN THE APPRECIATION OF HONEST CRITICS AND RUE THE BETRAYAL OF FALSE FRIENDS. I WANT TO APPRECIATE BEAUTY AND FIND THE BEST. I WANT TO MAKE SOME COMMITMENT TO HELP REDEEM SOCIAL CONDITIONS, TO KNOW THAT EVEN IN ONE'S LIFE, ONE CAN BREATHE EASIER BECAUSE HE HAS ACHIEVED SUCCESS IN SOME WAY IN MAKING THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE FOR US TO LIVE IN.

I FIRSTLY WANT TO THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE. I WANT TO THANK ALL OF YOU THAT STOOD BY ME IN FRIENDSHIP AND SUPPORT, IN KINDNESS AND GENEROSITY THROUGH THESE SIX OR SEVEN YEARS. I PARTICULARLY WANT TO THANK THOSE WHO HAVE STOOD BY OUR LEGAL FIRM, THE CLIENTS WHO HAVE REMAINED, THE COUNCILS WHO HAVE STOOD SOLID, THE INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE STOOD SOLID, THE CORPORATE ENTITIES WHO HAVE STOOD SOLID AND SUPPORTED THIS FIRM WHEN IT WOULD HAVE BEEN SO EASY TO WALK AWAY, WHEN NO DOUBT, YOU HAD ENCOURAGEMENT TO WALK AWAY, WHEN NO DOUBT, YOU THOUGHT IT WASN'T IN YOUR INTEREST TO REMAIN WITH A LEGAL FIRM WHERE SUCH SERIOUS ALLEGATIONS EXISTED AGAINST THE SENIOR PARTNER.

TO ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE STOOD THERE, THROUGH FRIENDSHIP, THROUGH THICK AND THIN, AS FRIENDS OR AS CLIENTS, FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART I SAY THANK YOU.

I ALSO SAY THANK YOU TO THIS GREAT CITY. I SAID AND I SAY AGAIN THAT I WOULD BE HAPPY TO DIE IN EITHER OF THE TWO GREAT CITIES OF THE WORLD, ROME OR CAMPBELLTOWN. THROUGHOUT THESE TRIBULATIONS, THROUGHOUT THESE TRIALS, THIS CITY REMAINED LOYAL. NO EFFORTS WERE MADE TO FORCE ME OUT. YES, WE SUFFERED THE INDIGNITIES, WE SUFFERED DISHONEST PHONE CALLS AND YES WE SUFFERED ANONYMOUS GRAFFITI AT OUR DOORSTEP.

BUT THE MAJORITY, THE VAST MAJORITY OF PEOPLE CONTINUED TO SUPPORT ME. THIS IS A TOWN I LOVE, THIS IS A COMMUNITY I LOVE. THIS IS WHERE MY HEART IS. CAMPBELLTOWN WILL ALWAYS BE MY HOME. I WILL ALWAYS BE A SON OF CAMPBELLTOWN AND PROUD TO PROCLAIM IT AS THE GREATEST CITY IN THE UNIVERSE, YES, EVEN BETTER THAN ROME.

ALL THOSE WHO SUPPORTED ME FROM THE POLITICAL STAGE AT THEIR OWN RISK, MICHAEL KNIGHT, CRAIG KNOWLES, TED PICKERING, MEG OATES, GEOFF CORRIGAN, GEORGE PACIULLO, PAUL TOSI, BRIAN CARR, MARK FITZGIBBON, ALEX SANCHEZ, WENDY WALLER, PAUL LYNCH, PETER PRIMROSE, KATE CARNELL, JAN PRIMROSE, ANN KNIGHT, PETER DUNCAN, MARK LATHAM, NICK AND KATHRYN GREINER, MEG OATES, IAN COHEN, LIZ KIRKBY, PETER BREEN, MARISE PAYNE, JOHN BROGDEN, MEREDITH BURGMANN, JOHN O'JOHNSON, PETA SEATON, BRIAN PEZZUTTI AND MANY

OTHERS INCLUDING OUR NEWLY ELECTED MEMBER, GRAHAM WEST, AND I WAS TOUCHED WHEN HE RANG ME THE OTHER DAY TO OFFER ME HIS PERSONAL BEST WISHES FOR THE JUDGMENT AND I KNOW I AM GOING TO MAKE A MISTAKE AND FORGET SOME NAMES HERE, BUT TO ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE PUT YOUR HEAD ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK, EITHER BY PERSONAL STATEMENTS, BY PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF SUPPORT OR BY GIVING EVIDENCE, I SAY THANK YOU. IT WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN.

I ALSO WANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE PRESENCE HERE TONIGHT OF THE MAYORS OF CAMDEN, CAMPBELLTOWN, WOLLONDILLY, LIVERPOOL, FAIRFIELD, BANKSTOWN, SOUTH SYDNEY, CANTERBURY, PARKES, WOLLONGONG AND RYDE COUNCILS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT AND THANKS FOR BEING HERE.

WITHOUT BEING IN ANY SPECIAL ORDER, CAN I JUST TALK ABOUT FOUR OF THOSE POLITICAL PERSONS. TED PICKERING WHO SPENT MUCH OF THE TIME DURING THE COURT CASE AT COURT GIVING ME SUPPORT AND UNDERSTANDING. TED REPRESENTS WHAT LIBERALISM IS ABOUT. TED CAN NEVER BE DESCRIBED AS A CONSERVATIVE. I SHOCKED TED (A GOOD METHODIST) MANY YEARS AGO WHEN I WAS THE FIRST GAY MAN HE HAD EVER MET. HIS CARE, HIS LOVE AND ASSISTANCE TO ME, BOTH BY HIM AND HIS WIFE HAS BEEN AMAZING. WE NEED MORE PEOPLE WITH COURAGE, COMMITMENT, CARING AND LOVE IN PARLIAMENT AS TED.

MICHAEL KNIGHT, ANNE KNIGHT, CATHRYN AND ANNA KNIGHT, ARE FRIENDS, INDEED, AND IN THE TURMOIL THEY WERE ALWAYS THERE, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, MICHAEL GAVE EVIDENCE EVEN

THOUGH AS THE OLYMPIC MINISTER, HE WAS DEALING WITH THE OPPOSITION, KERRY STOKES, ON A DAILY BASIS. MICHAEL IS A TRUE AND LOYAL FRIEND WHO HAS LEFT HIS MARK ON OUR CITY, WE MISS HIM.

THE GREINERS, NICK AND KATHRYN. WHAT GREAT PEOPLE AND GREAT HUMAN BEINGS. DURING THE ULTIMATE WORSE PERIOD OF ALL THIS KATHRYN GREINER TURNED 50. I WAS INVITED TO THAT PARTY AMONGST THE LEADERS AND HEADS OF BUSINESSES ALL OVER THE COMMUNITY AND I WAS SAT IN A MOST OBVIOUS SPOT SO THAT THEY COULD PUBLICLY, IN FRONT OF THEIR FRIENDS, ACKNOWLEDGE AND DECLARE THEIR FRIENDSHIP TO ME.

AND FINALLY, JAN, PETER AND DAVID PRIMROSE. THE CARING LOVING PEOPLE WHO HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THERE FOR ME. JAN IS ALWAYS READY TO DROP ANYTHING TO COME RUNNING TO HELP. THANK YOU.

TO THE LAWYERS, SOME ARE HERE, HOW DO YOU TALK ABOUT LAWYERS WHEN YOU THINK THE SYSTEM HAS GONE WRONG AND WHILE LAWYERS AT LARGE HAVE TO CHANGE, THOSE WHO GAVE OF THEMSELVES, GAVE OF THEIR HEART AND SOUL TO ME, WHO WORKED UNSTINTINGLY AND UNTIRINGLY AT SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED RATES, I CAN NEVER THANK ENOUGH. I COULD NEVER RECORD MY APPRECIATION. MY PERSONAL LOVE AND THANKS GOES TO RICHARD POTTER OF PHILLIPS FOX, KATE GILLINGHAM, KEVIN GIBBONS, MICHAEL GILL WHO GAVE SO MUCH OF HIS TIME. HE CAN'T BE HERE TONIGHT, BUT HIS WIFE AND FAMILY ARE HERE, AND TO THEM I

PASS ON MY THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT TO MICHAEL, ROD McGEOCH FROM CORRS, BRIAN WHITTAKER.

MICHAEL LEE WHO PUT UP WITH SO MUCH, WHO PUT UP WITH MY ROLLER COASTER RIDE, WHO WAS A COUNSELLOR AS WELL AS A LAWYER. HE IS HERE WITH HIS WIFE AND FAMILY.

MICHAEL HALL WHO IS NOW IN OXFORD, MY GREAT LITTLE BULL TERRIER, HIS FIRST AND ONLY CASE AT THE BAR.

IAN BARKER THE GREATEST LAWYER IN AUSTRALIA OR THE WORLD. HE IS THE MOST OUTSTANDING LAWYER OF ALL TIMES. HE IS A MAN OF FEW WORDS WITH A HORRID SENSE OF HUMOUR AND A LOVER OF A LOT OF GOOD WINE, WHO WORKS SUCH LONG HOURS AND FROM THE EARLY HOURS OF THE MORNING, AND HE IS HERE WITH HIS WIFE PENNY.

GUY REYNOLDS, IAN TEMBY, MARK BUSCOMBE, MICHAEL KING, GREG JAMES, MICHAEL BOZIC, PAUL DONOHUE WHO I THINK IS ALSO HERE. NASSIR BECHARA WHO CAME BACK TO WORK WITH MY FIRM JUST TO HELP ME WITH THIS CASE, HE IS HERE WITH HIS VERY PREGNANT WIFE.

JOE ELIAS.

FINALLY, OF COURSE, WAYNE FLYNN. WAYNE IS A LAWYER AND A FRIEND. WAYNE STAYED AT MY HOUSE DURING THE DOWN PERIODS. WAYNE DID EVERYTHING WITHOUT CHARGE AND WAYNE GAVE THE

WHOLE OF HIS TIME UP. I THANK WAYNE AND HIS PARTNER LEIGH FOR ALLOWING HIM TO BE INVOLVED.

TO ALL THOSE PEOPLE, THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNSTINTING LOYALTY, FRIENDSHIP, THE ENORMITY OF YOUR WORK EFFORT, PUTTING UP WITH ME AND MY MOODS, MY ROLLER COASTER RIDES AND ALSO FOR TEACHING ME OF THE NEED FOR US ALL TO BE BETTER LAWYERS, MORE CARING, MORE COMPASSIONATE AND EMPATHISING MORE WITH ONE'S CLIENTS.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, I THINK IT WOULD BE FANTASTIC IF EVERY LAWYER WENT THROUGH WHAT I WENT THROUGH AS THEY WOULD ALL LEARN TO BE BETTER LAWYERS.

TO MY FAMILY, MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS, MY NIECES AND NEPHEWS, ALL OF THEM, THANK YOU, PARTICULARLY TO MY BROTHER JIM'S KIDS WHO HAD TO GO TO SCHOOL LOCALLY AND HAD THE NAME MARSDEN AND PUT UP WITH THE JIBES, THE COMMENTS AND THE INNUENDOES, TO CARLA, JAMES AND NICK, I KNOW WHAT YOU WENT THROUGH. I KNOW THE LOYALTY YOU SHOWED. I KNOW THE LOYALTY TO YOUR UNCLE AND WHILE I PROBABLY HAVEN'T SAID IT ENOUGH, CAN I SAY IT PUBLICLY TO YOU THREE, AN ENORMOUS THANK YOU.

TO LOUISE'S CHILDREN WHO ALSO HAVE THE NAME, TO MAEVE AND GRAINNE, THE SAME THANKS. TO SALLY'S KIDS WHO DIDN'T HAVE THAT NAME, BUT WHOSE PERSONAL FRIENDSHIP, PERSONAL LOYALTY, ATTENDANCES AT COURT AND INCESSANT TELEPHONE CALLS, WITHOUT MY NIECES AND NEPHEWS AND MY BROTHERS AND

SISTERS, PARTICULARLY MY NIECES AND NEPHEWS, ALL OF THEM, I WOULD NOT HAVE GOT THROUGH IT, I WOULD NOT HAVE LIVED THROUGH IT, MY LIFE WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN WORTH LIVING. HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO HAVE A FAMILY.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK JOHN DUNKS WHO KEPT ME COMPANY AT HOME DURING SOME OF MY LOW PERIODS AND A YOUNG MAN WHO I TAUGHT TO BE AN ALTAR BOY BACK IN THE 1950'S AND NOW A PRIEST WHO COUNSELLED ME AND WAS VERY HELPFUL TO ME, FATHER CONFEGGI. ALSO THE LOCAL PYSCHOLOGIST, STEPHEN WOODS.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE REPORTING BY THE PRESS, PARTICULARLY STEPHEN TAYLOR OF SIXTY MINUTES, JOHN LYONS OF THE SUNDAY PROGRAM, KATE McCLYMONT OF THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, DAVID BRAYLEY OF THE AUSTRALIAN AND CINDY WOCKNER. IT IS NOT THEIR FAULT THAT THEY HAVE LOUSY SUB EDITORS WITH THE WRONG HEADLINES.

FOR THOSE PEOPLE WHO OFTEN THINK THAT GAY PEOPLE MAKE A CHOICE, THEY MAKE NO CHOICE. I HAVE NO MORE INFLUENCE ON MY SEXUALITY THAN YOU DO. GAY PEOPLE COME FROM EVERY FAMILY AND ARE TREATED IN DIFFERENT WAYS, BUT IT IS PART OF OUR LIFE, IT IS PART OF THAT GREAT RICH SOCIETY THAT OUR MAKER CREATES AND WE SHOULD WORK TOGETHER TO MAKE OUR SOCIETY A PLACE BASED ON LOVE, CARING AND SHARING, RATHER THAN HATE. WHETHER HE BE THE MUSLIM GOD, THE CHRISTIAN GOD, THE JEWISH GOD, THE HINDU GOD, WHATEVER HE IS, HE IS THE SUPERIOR AND HE GIVES THESE THINGS FOR A REASON AND WHAT

HAS HAPPENED TO ME HAS HAPPENED FOR A REASON AND AT THE END OF THE DAY I MUST BE A BETTER PERSON.

ONE SAVING GRACE THROUGHOUT ALL THIS HAS BEEN MY FAITH THAT WAS GIVEN TO ME BY MUM AND DAD. IT WAS TAUGHT TO ME THROUGH THE AGES BY THE GOOD SAMARITAN NUNS, THE MARIST BROTHERS AND THE DE LA SALLE BROTHERS, FAITH IN GOD AND A FAITH IN PRAYER. AN OLD VIEW THAT MORE THINGS ARE WROUGHT BY A PRAYER THAN THIS WORLD LIVES ON AND A DEVOTION TO WHAT WE IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH CALL THE BLESSED VIRGIN AND TO A SAINT, CALLED SAINT JUDE, HIS SPECIAL TITLE IS SAINT JUDE HOPE OF THE HOPELESS, AND I FELT PRETTY HOPELESS. I COULD NOT ACKNOWLEDGE THIS SPEECH WITHOUT ACKNOWLEDGING THE SUPPORT I HAVE GOT AND THE COMFORT I HAVE GOT THROUGH MY CHRISTIAN FAITH.

TO ALL THE STAFF AT MY LEGAL PRACTICE, YOUR LOYALTY, YOUR FRIENDSHIP, YOUR MESSAGES, YOUR STANDING BY DURING THESE DIFFICULT TIMES, YOUR PUTTING UP WITH ME, THANK YOU.

THERE IS ALSO ONE VERY SPECIAL PERSON WHO HAS CARBUNCLES ON HER KNEES AS A RESULT OF HER PRAYERS FOR ME WHO, IN FACT, SAT ME ON HER LAP WHEN I WAS A LITTLE 6 YEAR OLD INNOCENT, SWEET CHILD AND TAUGHT ME TO SAY THE MEMORARE AND SHE IS HERE TODAY. A SPRITELY 80 PLUS SOMETHING, AND I AM NOT ALLOWED TO SAY HOW MANY, WHO IS AND ALWAYS WILL BE, AN ADOPTED MEMBER OF THE MARSDEN FAMILY AND A VERY IMPORTANT ONE AT THAT, AND AFTER MY MUM, THE MOST WONDERFUL WOMAN IN THE WORLD. SHE IS A GOOD SAMARITAN

NUN AND HER NAME IS SISTER CLAUDIA. THAT IS WHY I TOOK CLAUDE AS MY CONFIRMATION NAME.

A PARTICULAR THANK YOU TO MY EVER SUFFERING PERSONAL ASSISTANT LYN KIRK WHO PUTS UP WITH MORE HELL THAN MOST PEOPLE WHO GO TO HELL PUT UP WITH, BUT WHO IS LOYAL, PLEASANT, SOMETIMES A BIT UP AND DOWN, BUT IS ALWAYS THERE, SOLID AS A ROCK, SOLID AS THE ROCK OF GIBRALTAR AND NEVER LOST HER RESPECT AND BELIEF IN ME.

I ALSO WANT TO SAY A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO MY DRIVER, BEKKY, WHO PUT UP WITH BEING SPAT ON, HAVING THE CAR WINDOWS SMASHED AND MANY OTHER THINGS.

MY THANKS GOES TO EVERY MEMBER OF THE STAFF AT MARSDENS. MY SPECIAL THANKS GOES TO THE CAMPBELLTOWN CITY COUNCIL WHO STOOD BY MY FIRM AS THE COUNCIL'S SOLICITOR, ALSO CAMDEN, LIVERPOOL, FAIRFIELD, BANKSTOWN AND WOLLONDILLY.

I ALSO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY OF SAYING THANK YOU TO THE SUPPORTERS AND FRIENDS I HAVE IN THE GAY COMMUNITY AT A SPECIAL FUNCTION ON 28 SEPTEMBER. I KNOW A LOT OF THEM HAVE COME ALL THE WAY OUT HERE TODAY, IN FACT, THEY EVEN GOT A BUS OUT HERE. TO YOU PEOPLE, THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART. I ESPECIALLY MENTION TWO OF MY CLOSE FRIENDS WHO HAVE STOOD BY ME WITH LOYALTY AND FRIENDSHIP, CARE AND SHARING, ROB AND JOHN, WHO ARE BOTH HERE TONIGHT.

THERE IS A SPECIAL FAMILY I WANT TO THANK FOR VERY TANGIBLE SUPPORT AND THAT IS THE PERICH FAMILY. I SAY NO MORE, THEY KNOW HOW I FEEL, OUR RELATIONSHIP WAS ONCE A LEGAL RELATIONSHIP, HOWEVER, OVER 30 YEARS IT HAS GROWN TO BE MUCH MORE THAN THAT. TONY AND RON, POP WOULD HAVE BEEN SO PROUD OF YOUR FAMILY.

FINALLY IN THE THANK YOU AREA, AND IF I HAVE MISSED YOU OUT, PLEASE ACCEPT MY APOLOGIES.

NOW TO MY PARTNERS AND THE FOUR FUTURE PARTNERS, THEIR WIVES AND FAMILIES, ALL OF YOU EQUALLY, BUT CAN I JUST RATE MY BROTHER ONE STEP HIGHER WHO HAD A MORE DIFFICULT TASK OF BEING BOTH A PARTNER AND A BROTHER. CAN I SAY TO YOU, YES, IT HAS BEEN DIFFICULT. YES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN WE HAVE HAD OUR UPS AND DOWNS, AND YES THEY HAVE SUFFERED BOTH FINANCIALLY IN REAL TERMS AND IN THE LOSS OF BUSINESS, AND YES THEY HAVE SUFFERED FINANCIALLY IN WHAT IT HAS COST THE PRACTICE AND WHAT WE HAVE PAID OUT, OVER THREE MILLION DOLLARS, AND THEY HAVE SUFFERED PERSONALLY, PERSONAL INSULTS AND ABUSE.

THEY HAVE SUFFERED IN THEIR CONSTANT JUSTIFICATION IN STANDING UP FOR ME, TO ATTACKS ABOUT THEMSELVES, THEIR WIVES AND CHILDREN AND I AM SURE SOME OF THEM MUST HAVE BEEN ON THE EDGE OF WHETHER THE PARTNERSHIP SHOULD BREAK UP OR NOT, BUT NOTHING WAS EVER SAID.

WE HAVE ALL BEEN ON THE EDGE OF SAYING WE CAN'T CARRY ON, BUT THEY STOOD BY ME LOYALY. WHAT A STRONG PARTNERSHIP THIS FIRM IS, THAT WE ARE STILL TOGETHER AFTER WHAT WE HAVE BEEN THROUGH. ARE THERE ANY OTHER LEGAL PARTNERSHIPS WHO HAVE GONE THROUGH THAT.

THANK YOU JOHN ADAM AND DREW PERCIVAL, KEN SEARLE, MY BROTHER JIM, ADAM SETON, DEAN ALCORN AND ELYSE WHITE. THANK YOU TO THE NEW PARTNERS WHO HAVE WAITED TO COME IN.

OSCAR WILDE ONCE SAID "MODERATION IS A FATAL THING. NOTHING SUCCEEDS LIKE SUCCESS". WELL, FOR MY PARTNERS' SAKE, I HOPE THAT THE SUCCESS TODAY ENSURES THAT WE CONTINUE TO HAVE SUCCESS IN OUR LEGAL PRACTICE, AND IT AGAIN BUILDS UP. FOR MYSELF I WANT TO BE MODERATE FOR A CHANGE.

I ALSO FEEL TERRIBLY SORRY FOR THOSE PERSONS WHO MADE THE FALSE ALLEGATIONS AGAINST ME. THEY ARE PERSONS WHO ARE DAMAGED AND MARGINALISED. WHY SHOULD THEY HAVE BEEN PUT THROUGH WHAT THEY HAVE BEEN PUT THROUGH BECAUSE CARROTS WERE HELD OUT FOR THEIR ADVANTAGE. HOW MUCH MORE DAMAGE HAS IT DONE TO THEM? WHY SHOULD THEY HAVE BEEN PUSHED TO DO THAT? WHAT EFFECT HAS IT HAD ON THEM, AND IF THEY HAD A FAMILY, THEIR FAMILY. IT IS A SAD DAY THAT THIS HAS HAPPENED. AGAIN, THE LEGAL SYSTEM HAS FAILED THEM, AND FAILED ME BECAUSE OF ITS INABILITY TO DELIVER SPEEDY AND AFFORDABLE JUSTICE.

TWO PEOPLE LOOK OUT THE SAME BARS. ONE SEES MUD AND ONE SEES STARS. I LOOKED OUT OF THOSE BARS FOR MY SOUL, BUT MY SOUL IN THE DARKEST PERIODS, I COULD NOT SEE. I LOOKED OUT OF THOSE BARS FOR MY GOD AND MY GOD ELUDED ME. I LOOKED OUT FOR A FRIEND AND I FOUND ALL THREE.

THERE ARE MANY WHO WOULD HAVE JUST WALKED AWAY FROM THIS FIGHT, AND THAT MAY HAVE BEEN EASIER. MY BELIEF IN MY OWN INTEGRITY, MY BELIEF IN THE DISHONESTY OF THE ALLEGATIONS STANDS AND REMAINS STRONG. I KNOW THE UPS AND DOWNS THAT I HAVE BEEN THROUGH AND I HAVE TAKEN SOME OF MY FRIENDS, PARTNERS AND FAMILY THROUGH THEM. I KNOW THE FINANCIAL BURDENS IT HAS CREATED TO ALL. I KNOW THAT I HAVE STILL GOT A LONG WAY TO GO, THERE WILL BE APPEAL AFTER APPEAL AFTER APPEAL AND I KNOW THAT AS A RESULT I AM GOING TO EVEN SUFFER FURTHER FINANCIALLY.

CAN I THANK YOU FOR PUTTING UP WITH ME, CAN I THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING ME. CAN I THANK YOU FOR BEING THERE AND CAN I THANK YOU MOST OF ALL, PARTNERS AND FRIENDS FOR ALL YOUR FRIENDSHIP DURING THESE DIFFICULT TIMES. IT IS THE FRIENDSHIP AND LOYALTY THAT HAS KEPT US TOGETHER.

FINALLY, CAN I JUST SAY TO THOSE WHO HAVE PERPETUATED THIS, WE ARE ALL EQUAL THROUGH THE EYES OF THE DIVINE BEING, AS I SAID, WHETHER IT BE MUSLIM, HINDU, JEWISH OR CHRISTIAN. NO MATTER WHAT OUR COLOUR, RACE, BACKGROUND, SOCIAL STANDING, ON THE RIGHT OR WRONG SIDE OF THE TRACK, WHAT ONE'S SEXUALITY MAY BE IN A FREE AND DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

LIKE OURS, WE ARE ALL EQUAL, THERE MUST NOT BE INEQUALITY AND IN TODAY'S SOCIETY, UNFORTUNATELY THERE IS STILL INEQUALITY. OUR INDIGENOUS POPULATION SUFFER ENORMOUS INEQUALITY THAT MANY OF US DON'T UNDERSTAND. OTHER MEMBERS AND OTHER RACES SUFFER INEQUALITY AND THE STRONGEST REMAINING BASTION OF PREJUDICE AND HATRED IS THAT OF THE GAY AND LESBIAN COMMUNITY.

I BELIEVE THAT THE FIGHT MUST CONTINUE AND I WILL CONTINUE THE FIGHT AND I AM NOT WALKING AWAY FROM IT. I WILL CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT OF THESE MINORITY GROUPS.

BEN CHIFLEY, ONE OF THE GREAT HEROES OF AUSTRALIA, A GREAT AUSTRALIAN PRIME MINISTER SAID:-

"IF AN IDEA IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR, NO MATTER THE PENALTY, IF THE FIGHT IS RIGHT, THEN TRUTH AND JUSTICE WILL PREVAIL."

THE IDEA OF EQUALITY FOR ALL PEOPLE BEFORE THE LAW IN OUR SOCIETY IS AN IDEA WORTH FIGHTING FOR, NO MATTER WHAT THE PENALTY, AND I WILL CONTINUE TO FIGHT.

I WANT TO HEAR THE BELLS OF FREEDOM RING FROM THE HILLTOPS OF THE CITY OF CAMPBELLTOWN AND WE LEAD THE WAY IN EQUALITY FOR ALL PEOPLE.

IN MY THANK YOUS CAN I JUST SAY THAT THE LAST SIX MONTHS HAVE BEEN THE HARDEST WHILST WAITING ON THE DECISION,

WHETHER IT IS WORTHWHILE WAITING AND THE THOUGHTS THAT GO WITH IT. THERE IS A PERSON WHO IS NOT HERE TONIGHT THAT I WANT TO THANK FOR LIFTING MY WILTING SPIRIT, FOR AGAIN GIVING ME SELF ESTEEM, CONFIDENCE AND AGAIN IN BUILDING MY SELF RESPECT, FOR HOLDING MY HAND IN FRIENDSHIP AND LOVE, FOR SUPPORTING ME DURING DIFFICULT TIMES, FOR ALLOWING ME TO CRY ON HIS SHOULDER, I WISH HE WAS HERE, I THANK HIM.

LAUNCH

IT IS MY PLEASURE TO RELAUNCH OUR OFFICE BRAND, TO RELAUNCH OUR LOGO, TO ASK MY BROTHER JIM TO TALK TO YOU. THIS IS A REBIRTH OF OUR PRACTICE. BECAUSE WE COME FROM THE HELL WE HAVE BEEN THROUGH WHILST WE CONTINUED TO SERVICE YOU, WE CONTINUED TO TRY AND PURSUE EXCELLENCE IN OUR DELIVERY OF LEGAL SERVICES, THERE HAVE OBVIOUSLY BEEN DIFFICULTIES AND YOU STAYED WITH US. LET US TONIGHT HOLD OUR HEADS HIGH IN THIS OUR RELAUNCH, THAT YOU GIVE US THAT SUPPORT, LET YOU TALK ABOUT OUR FIRM AS THE GREAT FIRM WE ARE AND THE GREAT COMMITMENT WE MAKE AND THE SERVICE WE GIVE.

WE WILL AND ALWAYS WILL, RETAIN THE NAME MARSDENS AND HAVE NEVER BEEN ASHAMED OF IT.

WE HAVE A COMMITMENT TO CAMPBELLTOWN AND OUR HEAD OFFICE WILL ALWAYS BE HERE.

WE MIGHT ACT FOR BIG CORPORATIONS, COUNCILS OR OTHER ORGANISATIONS, BUT THE LADY ON THE PENSION OR THE LEGAL AID CLIENT WILL CONTINUE TO RECEIVE THE SAME SERVICE AND THE SAME COMMITMENT THAT WE CAN GIVE TO OUR BIGGEST CLIENTS

IN A FEW MINUTES I WILL BE ASKING MY BROTHER JIM TO SPEAK ON THIS RELAUNCH.

CAN I JUST SAY AGAIN, THIS IS A HUMBLING EXPERIENCE. IT IS NOT A JOYOUS OCCASION, I HAVE NOTHING TO GLOAT ABOUT. I HAVE NOT WON ANYTHING.

I HAVE JUST OBTAINED JUSTICE BUT IN DOING SO I AM A DAMAGED HUMAN BEING, BUT A BETTER HUMAN BEING FOR IT AND IN DOING SO, WITHOUT ALL THE PEOPLE HERE, EVERYONE I HAVE MENTIONED, I WOULD NEVER HAVE BEEN THAT. YOUR THOUGHTS, YOUR PRAYERS, KINDNESS AND SUPPORT, FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART, THANK YOU ONE AND ALL.

I HAVE ALWAYS FELT THAT WHATEVER THE GOAL WE ARE PURSUING, NO MATTER HOW RUGGED THAT CLIMB, WE ARE CERTAIN TO GET THERE BY TRYING OUR BEST AND HOPEFULLY TAKING ONE DAY AT A TIME. AS I REACH FOR GOALS I WOULD LIKE TO ACHIEVE, MAY I FIND THE STRENGTH THAT I WILL NEED TO MEET THE FUTURE CHALLENGES. I WILL SIMPLY TAKE ONE STEP AT A TIME UNTIL THE DAY THAT I CAN SAY AT THE END OF IT, IN THE WORDS OF THE GREAT FRENCH SOCIALIST, "I PASS THROUGH THIS WORLD BUT ONCE, THEREFORE LET ME SO LIVE, BUT WHEN I'M DYING I CAN SAY I HAVE

GIVEN MY LIFE TO THE FINEST CAUSE IN THE WORLD, THE
LIBERATION OF MANKIND."

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR BEING HERE.

JRM